TOWN & COUNTRY CHURCH

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*No. 42*
*March, 1948*

# Enriching the Program of Rural Churches

C. M. HANNA

• R. M. Eyeman, assistant superintendent of public instruction for the state of Ohio, made a statement at a recent meeting of the American Country Life Association which offers an approach to one of the major problems of the rural church. He said that in Ohio they were convinced that they had proceeded too drastically in the matter of school consolidation and that they were now discovering that while it was true that many educational functions must be carried on at the level of the larger community, there were also some educational functions which could only be effective at the neighborhood level. The school authorities now find themselves wishing that they had retained possession of the smaller school buildings so as to carry on a part of the total program in the smaller unit.

### Consolidation of Churches

This statement has great significance for the leaders of the rural church movement in America. Consolidation of rural churches cannot take place by decree; therefore, it has not kept pace with school consolidation. Frequently the people have come to think in terms of the larger community in matters of education, farm organization, recreation and the like, but they have continued the small rural church as a neighborhood institution.

Consolidation of small rural churches has lagged because of family loyalties—and perhaps because the people felt that some of the neighborhood functions of the small church were definitely needed. But these small neighborhood churches have been unable to give the people many services which could be supplied only at the level of the larger community. Perhaps we need to experiment to discover what church functions can best be performed at the neighborhood level and what functions can best be performed at the level of the larger community.

### One Experiment

Such an experiment has been carried on for the past six years with a group of 13 small rural churches around Charlestown, Indiana, known as the Todd-Dickey Rural Training Parish. These churches are located in an area 25 miles square and vary in size from 33 to 196 members. Twelve of these churches are distinctly of the neighborhood type—seven of them in small villages and five in the open country. The thirteenth is in a small city. Up until 1942 they operated as individual churches with programs such as could be maintained at the neighborhood level. Since that time the churches have been organized into a cooperative parish with the express purpose of discovering what they can do together better than they can do separately.

### Cooperative Parish

It has been found profitable to have Sunday School, preaching services and certain types of fellowship programs at the level of the small local church. Each church keeps its own autonomy, its own leadership, and operates its own local program, but two lay representatives elected from each congregation and the members of the staff make up the parish council, which meets quarterly to explore possible areas of cooperation looking towards an enriched program. Many areas of profitable cooperation have been discovered. Their description may be of help to other groups of rural churches facing a similar problem.

The first experiment was in the area of church publicity. A "mimeograph cooperative" was established and the necessary equipment was purchased. Now each of the churches can get out church bulletins, church letters and other types of church publicity at a small cost. A "Parish News" is published at frequent intervals to keep the churches in touch with the cooperative program.

## Cooperative Library

Next, a cooperative vacation church school library was established. Each church pays $2.00 a year and this money is used to add new text books to the library. The individual church can borrow as many books as it needs for use in the vacation church school. After five years a very complete library of vacation school texts has been acquired.

Missionary education was the next area of cooperation and it has proceeded along three lines. Many of the churches had not had a visiting missionary for years but the boards have been very cooperative in sending two missionaries a year to stay in the parish for a week and visit every church. Missionary education books are purchased and circulated from church to church so that during the past year these books had over 1,000 readers.

## Missionary Movies

After experimentation with missionary movies the parish purchased a sound movie projector and now each church has ready access to missionary and other educational movies, a service which would have been impossible on the basis of the small individual church. This intensive missionary education has resulted in greatly increased giving on the part of the churches.

In many of the churches the small number of young people made effective youth work very difficult. This led to the formation of a parish youth council, with four representatives from each church. This council undertakes to carry on a program of youth meetings and activities at the parish level. In the early years it was considered fine if a parish youth meeting brought together 40 or 50 young people—but at a recent rally there were 147 present. As group consciousness grows, the attendance and participation will reach an even larger number.

## Leadership Training

Leadership Training was difficult at the local level because of the small number of officers and teachers in the individual Sunday schools but two training schools at the parish level have brought out an enrollment of 100 in each of the two schools. These schools will now be held quarterly.

As can well be imagined music appreciation was at a low level in the small churches—but now, with a parish director of music, a new interest is being manifest. A parish choir has been formed and last year they put on a Christmas Cantata which was broadcasted from the little village of Bethlehem within the bounds of the parish.

## Cooperative Bus

The most recent cooperative effort of the churches of the parish has been the purchase of a parish bus to help with transportation problems both for local church and parish-wide meetings. The success of this venture will have to be reported on at a later date.

The parish council is convinced that cooperation on the larger community level is fruitful in enriching the program of the small neighborhood churches and at the same time the advantages of certain services at the neighborhood level are retained. The Council is sure that experimentation in this field needs to be carried further and that it can be adapted to varied situations. With a will to cooperate and a spirit of adventure much can be done to enrich the programs of many small rural churches.

### *Thanks for a Garden*

JANIE SMITH RHYNE

Thank God we must go out and spade the soil,
Must feel and pulverize the loam, and sow
The seed with forethought; bend our backs in toil
And weary every sinew till we know
A laborer's sound, restoring sleep. Thank God
That hands, by feeling good warm earth, lay hold
Somehow on natal strength deep in the sod.
But thank him, too, for problems manifold—
For drought or flood or pests of any kind
Which drive the war a moment out of mind.

*—Adult Student*

## Sharecropper Self-Help Plan

• Rev. Andrew Lawrence of Camden, Miss., described a self-help plan for sharecroppers before the recent meeting of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Father Lawrence said that he and his associates were preparing one hundred children of sharecropper families for life on farms that they will purchase with the assistance of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity. He stated that a majority of the families are Negroes, and that 90 per cent of them are not Roman Catholics.

The mission opened an agricultural school in Camden in 1944, he said. Since then fourteen families have been helped to acquire their own farms. The school begins practical farming courses for both boys and girls in the fifth grade. By the time students graduate from high school, Father Lawrence said, they may earn enough money from farm work to make a down payment on ten acres of land.

It is expected that the acreage will be paid for within three years. Then the mission continues to help them so that they may eventually have 100 acres per family with a permanent home.

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## Co-op Scholarships

• St. Paul, Minn.—Ten 4-year college scholarships at Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, are being offered to sons and daughters of Northwest farmers by the Farmers Union Grain Terminal Association, according to an announcement by M. W. Thatcher, general manager.

The purpose of the scholarships is to encourage study of the cooperative movement and to encourage colleges to offer a broader study of cooperatives as a part of their curriculum.

The Valparaiso University scholarships for study of cooperatives are regarded as experimental. Each scholarship winner will receive $500 each year for four years.

## Grandma Moses

Mary Robertson Moses was born on a farm near Greenwich, New York. Except for a short while in Virginia after she married, she has spent all her life in New York's beautiful Hudson Valley.

She spent 50 years running a farm house and doing the regular chores that are the lot of farmers' wives. She was an expert at making butter and preserves and often won prizes at the county fair.

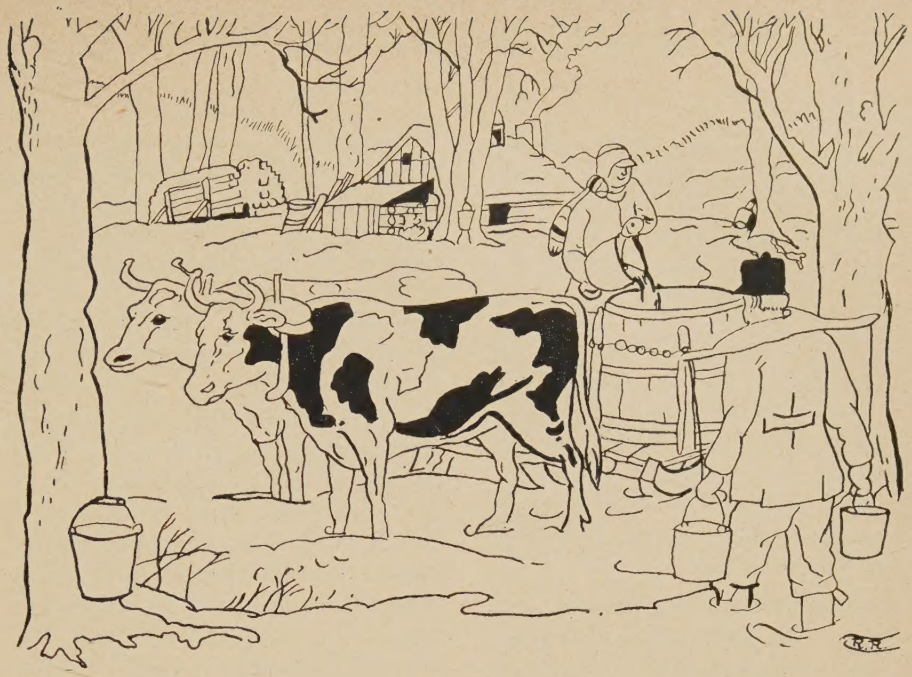
When she was 76 she became afflicted with arthritis so she could no longer carry on her many farm activities.

She couldn't sit still with nothing to do so she started making colored yarn pictures on burlap. She enjoyed this for some time until, much to her dismay, she discovered that moths were destroying her handiwork in the summer.

A younger sister asked her why she didn't *paint* her pictures. She thought that was worth trying, so she went to the barn and got several colors of wagon paint and some pieces of builder's board and started in. For several years nobody paid any attention to her pictures but she was having fun painting what she saw from her bedroom window and what she saw along the road to the village . . . and scenes she remembered from childhood.

Then, one day, a New Yorker saw her paintings and bought a few of them. He brought them to New York City where her first one-man show took place at the Galerie St. Etienne in October 1940. It was a great success. Galleries and museums began to be interested in the work of this painter, and bought the pictures for their collections.

The colors were beautiful, and Grandma painted so simply and unmistakably what she saw and remembered, that art critics and collectors were amazed at her ability. It was astonishing how anyone without training or even an interest in art until she was 76, could have such a remarkable understanding of color and such a wonderful skill for putting her thoughts on canvas.



She has had more newspaper publicity and magazine articles written about her in the past few years than any contemporary artist . . . but it hasn't turned her head.

Grandma Moses attended the first showing of her paintings in New York. She hadn't been to the city for forty years. She was glad to go but she was quite perplexed at the big crowd at the Art Gallery. She couldn't understand why all of those people had come to see her paintings, and hear about how she did them. She explained that she painted only for her own amusement.

At 86, Grandma Moses is still sitting at her window happily painting away . . . perpetuating her fine thinking and remarkable ability for the centuries to come . . . not only making a wonderful contribution to art, but forever proving the age old adage, "You are never too old to learn."

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• O God, who has placed us as Thy children in a world Thou hast created for us, give us thankful hearts as we work and as we pray. We praise Thee for the day of light and life, for the night which brings rest and sleep; and for the ordered course of nature, seed-time and harvest, which Thou has given us. We bless Thee that Thou hast given us the joy of children, the wisdom of old men. We thank Thee for all holy and humble men of heart, for the love of God and man which shines forth in commonplace lives, and above all, for the vision of Thyself, in loneliness and fellowship, in sacrament and in prayer; for these, and all other benefits, we praise and glorify Thy name, now and forevermore. Amen.

—Ursula N. Niebuhr, *Hymns for Worship,* Association Press

• O God, Our Father, for the gladness of Thy mornings and the sunshine of Thy days, for the beauty of Thy nature world, we thank Thee. For the joyful songs of birds, for the color of flowers, for the grandeur of hills and mountains, we give Thee praise.

O Lord, Father of Christ, help us to live with nature as did Christ. From it, may our hearts be as His, open and ready to draw strength and refreshment. Give us greater capacity for joy in life and grant us the power to pass on to others this message of gladness.

Help us, O God, to find Thee in friendly intimacies, in mutual understanding and high aspirations. In Jesus' name. Amen.

—Mrs. Gardner L. Winn

# Rebuilding the Rural Church

THOMAS ALFRED TRIPP

• Who has not come upon a beautiful church by the wayside, a freshly painted temple in the hills set about with shrubs and flowers in the midst of a trim green lawn, showing the results of attention from loving hearts and careful hands? In spite of tremendous handicaps and limited resources many such churches are to be found in villages and open country, churches which are the center of their respective communities and making the best of their situations in effectively meeting their great opportunities.

Unfortunately, other churches are to be seen in many rural communities that are not such wholesome sights. The buildings often show the signs of neglect, are in great need of repair and paint, and are set in grounds which are barren, unsightly blotches on the landscape. While the condition of the property does not always indicate the real state of the church, it is often true that neglected buildings house a routine of religious services with little meaning and an inadequate program. But, whatever their appearance, many rural churches need to be "rebuilt" that they may have significance to persons and the community.

## Differences Do Not Happen

The difference between the unsightly and ineffective church, on the one hand, and the beautiful and vital one, on the other, is something that does not just happen. It will require work to build or "rebuild" the rural church. The best efforts of both city and country churches will be needed to accomplish this task.

America is two-fifths rural. Nearly three-fourths of the churches in the United States are rural, that is, located in the open country or in small towns. These churches are to be found in every section of the nation and are often the strongest factors for neighborhood solidarity and social change in their respective localities. Some of them are being closed and a few new ones are being organized each year to meet the demands of specific situations. Changing times call for a changing church. The coming of the automobile, modern communication and scientific farming are having profound effect on the rural community, the agricultural economy and, especially, the country church.

A rural church is a community of Christians trying to live the good life and to build a wholesome society with much the same motives as a city church endeavoring to do similar things. A rural church, however, is close to the soil, and its people are acquainted with nature. It is the church of the farmers and the village dwellers.

## Good Use of Resources

Country churches are often small and frequently are associated with others in the vicinity in "larger parishes" or "yoked fields" in order to share in the support of a minister. Some of them must have missionary aid to keep going; not all rural churches are weak, however. Many of them are able to compare well with their city brethren in a strong Christian program and in missionary giving. It is to the credit of country people and village that they usually make remarkably good use of their meager resources in what are sometimes most trying circumstances.

Rural churches suffer from floods, droughts, dust storms, grasshoppers and bad markets. The stronger help the weak, and the churches that are able to do so go quietly about their work of aiding needy parishes through their missionary giving year after year. Through home missions and other agencies they reach out a helping hand to the smaller rural parishes with assistance for the pastor's salary, loans for their building needs, pensions for their ministers and materials for their educational activities.

## Counsel Available

Through the visits of denominational and interdenominational field workers, helpful counsel is offered toward the improvement of programs that will meet the needs of the rural community, help in the discovery and training of rural ministers, all for the enrichment and appreciation of country life and the church.

John Frederick Oberlin, famous rural pastor, once said, "I do not want to labor in some easy pastoral charge where I can be at ease. I want a work no one else wishes to do; and which will not be done unless I do it." While not all pastors of town and country churches have such high ideals, many of them have deliberately dedicated their lives to a ministry to rural people. Here is a story told by one of them:

"Through the years I have chosen to serve rural churches. Last spring my wife and I went to a church 15 miles from a town at the foot of the Ozarks. The parsonage was all run down and not fit to live in. The stable was a ramshackle old shed. We almost camped out while we put in a garden and got the church work going. Then we started to fix up the place a bit. With the help of the laymen we built a garage, 10 x 24 feet, using the lumber from the old house and barn. We are living quite comfortably, though cramped, in that until we can build a new parsonage.

## A Minister's Testimony

"We count on our garden for 50 per cent of our food to supplement our small salary. My wife cans from 450 to 600 quarts of vegetables and fruit every year. By keeping two cows and a horse we make good use of the 36 acres attached to the church property.

"Then, too, we have a few sheep and about 60 chickens. The sheep began as an experiment with us. I bought 6 for $25. Last year we made $57 from wool and meat and have more sheep than when we started.

"Our main job, of course, is our parish work which takes all of our time, but we manage to live happily among these people."

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# The Significance of the Rogation Days

RT. REV. GEORGE KENNEDY ALLEN BELL, BISHOP OF CHICHESTER, ENGLAND

• The ancient feasts bore witness to man's faith in God as the God of nature and the giver of all good things; and as the Creator, intimately concerned with the welfare of all that He has created. They were also expressions of a healthy community life, in which all classes of men, women and children in the countryside joined together, alike for work and worship. They took their place in a pattern of life of which God was the centre. And when God is really the centre of life's pattern, everything else falls into its place.

Times have changed much in the last two centuries. The tendency everywhere is for the machine to gain the mastery, and for life to become more and more artificial, more and more wanting in community, in love of the home, in care for beauty, and in faith in God. "For long enough," says T. S. Eliot, "we have believed in nothing but the values arising in a mechanized, commercialized, urbanized way of life; it would be well for us to face the permanent conditions upon which God allows us to live upon this planet."

## Right Attitude

We need now to get back a right attitude to nature, which implies also a right attitude to God. Let the church and the countryside rediscover one another, and who knows what an awakening may take place in the whole life of the nation! It is in this spirit that I invite you to observe Rogation Sunday, now happily chosen by the Minister of Agriculture as Farm Sunday, and the Rogation Days which have come around again to remind us of the deep things of God.

(1) First of all, then let us remember that these days are days of prayer for the livestock and the crops. We who are children of the earth bring the earth itself before the Heavenly Father. We bring the sower and we bring the seed. We bring the beasts and the birds and those who tend them. We acknowledge that the earth is the Lord's and all the fruits thereof; that God is the God of nature; that He quickens the corn, and drives the plough. We acknowledge that the capacity of the earth to provide us with food is God's greatest gift for the physical welfare of mankind. We acknowledge our dependence on the sunshine and on the rain for the increase which God gives at the different seasons of the year. We acknowledge our duty to treat the earth with proper reverence, so nurturing it that its fertility may never fail, and so using it that none may be deprived of their rightful share in its wealth.

## Blessed Vocation

Further, we acknowledge that those who are called to work upon the earth for the producing of food are following a vocation blessed by God, as well as rendering one of the greatest services to their fellow human beings. We therefore acknowledge our responsibility also for securing that all those engaged in the industry of agriculture shall have fair and healthy conditions in which to live and work today, and shall be free from fear for the future. Let us then pray God to bless the soil and its produce, to bless the beasts and to bless all who labour in the land.

(2) There is a second purpose which I would ask you also to bear in mind at Rogationtide. In the old homily for Rogation Week, issued by Queen Elizabeth, one of the main reasons given for beating the bounds of the parishes in procession was the duty of guarding against "strange encroachments." Men are bidden to be content with their own, and not to encroach on one another's land or claim more than what "in ancient right and custom our forefathers have peaceably laid out unto us for our commodity and comfort."

## Guarding the Country

Nowadays the encroachment against which we should be most on our guard is that of the town on the country. This encroachment takes various forms and has various causes, economic and social. It may be the result of demands made by the town for new housing estates or factory sites outside its boundaries or for holiday-making in conglomerations of railway carriages and caravans and in colonies of cheap bungalows and week-end cottages. It may be due to the lure of the town attracting some of the most vigorous of the youth in the villages away from their natural homes, by the offer of higher wages, better living conditions and ampler facilities for amusement.

The town and the country are necessary to one another and each should welcome the other. But the townsman often needs to learn a greater reverence for the beauty of the countryside and the customs of the countryman, even in such simple matters as the avoidance of litter, and closing gates behind him in his walks through the fields. And the whole nation has to be won to a deeper understanding of the basic importance of the land, and all who work on the land, in the national economy. Had that basic importance been recognized in the past we should never have allowed the economic conditions in the rural areas to compare so badly with the conditions in the towns or have paid so little heed to the great drift of labour from the land.

When agriculture is established on a sound economic foundation and country people are provided with adequate housing and education and medical services, adequate facilities for healthy recreation, adequate water and electricity, and adequate means of developing village life and industries on lines true to village genius, the whole position will be transformed! Surely in times like these we should consider our ways, and should resolve that, not only during the war but in peace time as well, the vital importance of the land should be fully understood. Once again I venture to declare that we must get back a right attitude to nature, which implies a right attitude to God.

*—From a Pastoral Letter.*

## Rural Life Sunday, May 2, 1948

• Rural Life Sunday will again be observed on Rogation Sunday, the fifth Sunday after Easter, May 2, 1948. Churches are free to observe the emphasis on any other convenient Sunday in the spring of the year.

Rev. Edward K. Ziegler of the Church of the Brethren, Bridgewater, Va., has prepared this year's order of service for publication by the Committee on Town and Country. You may secure this order of service through your cooperating home mission board. Those who cannot secure it this way may secure single copies from the Committee on Town and Country, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at five cents each postpaid. Quantities will be available at the following rates: 100 copies, $1.00; 250 copies, $2.05; 500 copies, $3.30; 1,000 copies, $6.00 —carriage additional. Please order your copies early.

## Origin

Rural Life Sunday, the fifth after Easter, which has its roots in the Rogation Days, is a day set apart for emphasizing the meaning of Christianity for rural life; for the invocation of God's blessing upon the seed, the fruits of the soil, and the cultivators of the earth: for the consideration of justice for agriculture and the spiritual values of rural life. It was first observed in 1929, at the suggestion of the International Association of Agricultural Missions, and according to plans adopted by the Home Missions Council and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and many religious bodies.

## How to Observe

Both rural and city churches may observe Rural Life Sunday. Each type of church may invite the other to share in some of its services. Parishes consisting of several churches in a circuit or yoked field should make it a parish day for all services and a dinner on the grounds. Country and city pastors might exchange pulpits on this day. Local agricultural organizations such as 4-H Clubs, Future Farmers, Farm Bureau, Grange and Farmer's Union, are often willing to attend and share in the services. A rural play or pageant may be substituted for discussion groups in the evening. In certain states 4-H Clubs are especially interested in Rural Life Sunday.

## How the Christian Carloads Project Started

• Church World Service offers its facilities to the churches and community organizations of your county or state in organizing community-wide drives to collect and ship overseas bulk lots of cotton, grain, dairy products, beans or other high-nutrition, non-perishable produce, as well as shoes, bedding and clothing.

The general plan for handling bulk shipments of food stuffs or cotton is to sell enough at the point of processing to supply funds for delivering the rest overseas. But if you raise enough money through other "events" to pay these shipping charges, this may not be necessary. You will want to provide funds also for shipping overseas the clothing, bedding and shoes which you collect.

This Christian Carloads plan started at a church meeting in a small mid-western town. One church member who had been moved by stories and pictures of overseas need, got to his feet and said he would give a bushel of wheat from his farm. He asked which of his neighbors would do the same. Soon a carload had been pledged. Then they decided to take the whole community in on their plan. In the end they sent a full trainload.

But it took *one man* to start it.

It takes *one man* to start things moving in any area.

For your district—YOU ARE THE MAN!

Write to Christian Rural Overseas Program, 308 West Washington St., Chicago 6, Ill.

## Religion and Life in the Countryside

AARON H. RAPKING

As President, Theodore Roosevelt ppointed a "Country Life Com-ıission." This Commission made a udy of country life and in 1908 ublished a very significant report.

Theodore Roosevelt, one of our reat presidents, had a deep appre-iation of the importance of the lace of the church in our democ-acy. Here are some of the reasons e once gave for going to Church:

"In this actual world, a churchless ommunity—a community where ıen have abandoned and scoffed at, r ignored their religious needs—is community on the rapid down rade.

"Church work and church attend-nce mean the cultivation of the ıabit of feeling some responsibility or others.

"There are enough holidays for nost of us. Sundays differ from ther holidays in the fact that there ıre fifty-two of them every year. Therefore, on Sundays go to church.

"Yes, I know all the excuses. I know that one can worship the Creator in a grove of trees, or by a running brook, or in a man's own ıouse just as well as in a church. But I also know, as a matter of cold act, the average man does not thus worship.

"He may not hear a good sermon ıt church. He will hear a sermon by a good man who, with his good wife, is engaged all the week in making hard lives a little easier.

"He will listen to and take part in reading some beautiful passages from the Bible. And if he is not familiar with the Bible, he has suffered a loss. He will take part in singing some good hymns.

"He will meet and nod or speak to good, quiet neighbors. He will come away feeling a little more charitable toward all the world, even toward those excessively foolish young men who regard church-going as a soft performance.

"I advocate a man's joining in church work for the sake of showing his faith by his works."

Those of us who live and work in the countryside need to give more time to strengthening the fellowship of our churches. In many country communities only a very small percentage have family worship. There is no doubt a very close relationship between these two disturbing facts, and the increase in the number of broken homes and crime in the countryside.

It is indeed quite disturbing to note the lack of interest in many country churches as evidenced by the conditions of the yards, the paint on the outside, and the condition of so many churches on the inside. In many communities, the improvement of the churches is lagging behind the improvement of our homes.

Why not discuss the church grounds and how they could be made more beautiful and the church or churches put in better condition both inside and outside? Why not join with others in making a list of the boys and girls who need the help the church alone can give, and urge them to share in the fellowship.

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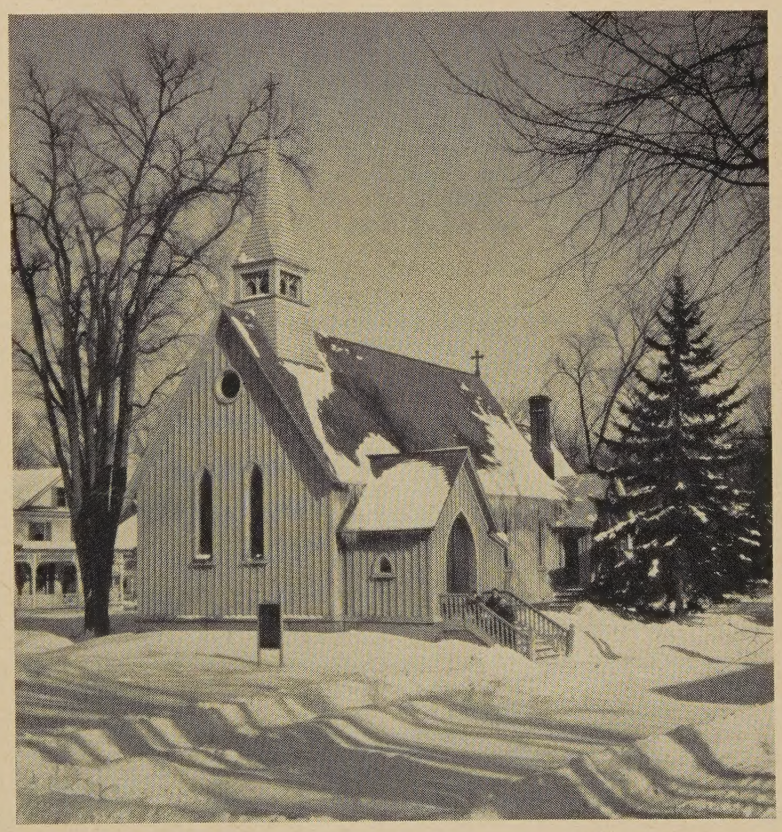
## Those Without Homes

• The entreaty for help for the host of homeless people in Europe, displaced victims of the war, has been joined by the voice of another Protestant leader, upon his return to America from a first-hand survey of the Displaced Persons camps on the continent.

The churchman, Rev. Almon R. Pepper, Vice-chairman of the Church World Service Board of Directors, declared at the end of his trip that "America is losing a great opportunity by not allowing many more of these freedom-loving people to come here to resettle."

Canon Pepper is Executive Secretary of the Department of Christian Social Relations of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

There are about 850,000 displaced persons in camps in western Europe, he said, "most of whom came as forced laborers to Germany, or were left there by the ebb and flow of the battling armies."



Lancaster, N. H. —*A. Devaney, Inc.*

# *In-Service Training for the Minister in Town and Country—1948*

A Description of Schools, Institutes, Graduate Courses to be held by Agricultural Colleges, Theological Seminaries, etc.

• The main purposes of the sessions held are: (1) To help ministers become acquainted with tested methods of town and country work. (2) To assist them in securing an understanding of the trends and problems of modern country life. (3) To develop fellowship among ministers in town and country. (4) To increase contacts of ministers with agricultural leaders. Certain of the home mission boards of religious bodies offer a limited number of scholarships to country pastors. Ministers interested should communicate with their boards to learn if scholarships are available and on what terms.

## SCHOOLS IN WHICH GRADUATE CREDIT IS OBTAINABLE

| Date | Name | Person to Be Addressed |
|---|---|---|
| June 28-July 24 | **Wisconsin Town-Country Leadership Course**<br>University of Wisconsin, Madison | Prof. J. H. Kolb, 319 Agricultural Hall, Madison 6, Wis. |
| July 26-August 27 | **Interdenominational School for Rural Leaders**<br>Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill. | Prof. Rockwell C. Smith |

## SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES FOR TEN DAYS OR OVER

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| June 14-July 21 | **The Farm Survey School for Rural Pastors**<br>Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa | Dr. Calvin T. Schnucker, University of Dubuque, Dubuque, Iowa |
| July 5-16 | **Summer School for Rural Pastors and Laymen**<br>Cornell University, Ithaca, N. Y. | Rev. Stanley E. Skinner, Barnes Hall, Ithaca, N. Y. |
| July 5-16 | **Institute of Town and Country Pastors**<br>State College of Washington, Pullman, Wash. | L. J. Elias |
| July 5-19 | **Rural Leadership Special Course**<br>Michigan State College, East Lansing, Mich. | O. Ulrey |
| July 12-23 | **Summer School of Christian Education**<br>Faribault, Minnesota | Faribault Summer School, 300 Anchor Building, St. Paul 1, Minn. |

## SCHOOLS AND INSTITUTES OF ONE WEEK OR LESS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| January 21-22 | **Nebraska Town and Country Church Conference**<br>College of Agriculture, Lincoln, Nebr. | J. L. Thomas |
| January 27-30 | **Rural Life Conference for Vermont Pastors**<br>University of Vermont, Burlington, Vt. | Rev. Stanley B. Hyde, Vt. Church Council, 189 S. Winooski Ave., Burlington |
| February 3-4 | **Rural Ministers' Institute**<br>Kansas State College, Manhattan, Kansas | Wayne E. Testerman |
| February 9-13 | **Rural Pastors' Short Course**<br>University of Illinois, Champaign, Ill. | Dr. D. E. Lindstrom, 305 Mumford Hall, Urbana, Ill. |
| March 29-April 2 | **Town and Country Church Leaders' Conference**<br>University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz. | O. G. Herbrecht, Arizona Council of Churches, Box 1702, Phoenix, Arizona |
| April 6-9 | **Rural Leadership Institute**<br>University of Kentucky, Lexington, Ky. | Ralph J. Ramsey |
| April 19-23 | **Church Leadership Training Course**<br>Fort Valley College, Fort Valley, Ga. | Harry V. Richardson, Tuskegee Institute, Ala. |
| June 7-9 | **Knowles Institute for Town and Country Ministers**<br>New Jersey Coll. of Agriculture, New Brunswick | Dr. Charles A. Thompson |
| June 7-11 | **Ministers' Conference**<br>Duke University, Durham, N. C. | Dr. H. E. Spence |
| June 14-16 | **Institute for Town and Country Churches**<br>University of New Hampshire, Durham, N. H. | Rev. George W. Wiesen, 22 Amherst St., Manchester, N. H. |
| June 14-18 | **Conference for Town and Country Pastors**<br>Pennsylvania State College, State College, Pa. | Prof. William V. Dennis |
| June 28-July 2 | **Rural Church Conference**<br>A & M College, College Station, Texas | Daniel Russell |
| July 5-9 | **Rural Leadership School**<br>Purdue University, Lafayette, Ind. | Dr. J. Edwin Losey |
| July 12-16 | **Institute for Town and Country Churches**<br>Oregon State College, Corvallis, Ore. | Mr. Harry C. Seymour, Agricultural Bldg., 127 |
| August 17-19 | **Short Course for Town and Country Ministers**<br>College of Agriculture, Fargo, N. D. | Rev. C. A. Armstrong, N.D. Interchurch Council, 13 Roxy Bldg., Fargo, N. D. |
| August 23-27 | **Pastors' Summer School**<br>College of the Pacific, Stockton, California | Rev. F. Carl Schmidt, 214 South Broadway, Turlock, California |
| July 12-16 | **Summer School for Rural Ministers**<br>Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va. | Dr. B. L. Hummel |
| Dates to be announced later | **Institute for Town and Country Ministers**<br>A & M College, Stillwater, Okla. | O. D. Duncan |

# Country Church Conducts College

LEWIS C. FRENCH

Just in case you think rural people re not up on their toes, soberly inking over the times, drop in for ie "winter night college and fo-ım" in the Honey Creek, Wis., aptist church and community hall. 'here are only four stores, a gaso-ne filling station, a cubby-hole post ffice and around 20 homes in this ttle Walworth county community ear the Racine county line.

But in listing assets of Honey reek do not overlook the brick aptist church and the adjoining ommunity hall. The residents say ie village has no boundaries and, ) far as civil life is concerned, the ommunity stretches for more than o miles from this church and hall. eople use them both as a place to orship and a place to learn and as n old-fashioned town meeting to ılk over the times.

For a clear understanding of this inter's night college and forum go ack three years when three minis-ers and the people decided they anted to know more about what is oing on.

## uilt Through Cooperation

The Rev. C. R. McBride was then astor of the Honey Creek church. Ie is now at the Northern Baptist ssembly on Green Lake helping ex-and the Honey Creek idea.

Mr. McBride was determined the ural church be a more powerful actor in the every day living of more eople. Nor was the effort to be de-ominational. Associated with Mr. IcBride were the Rev. Bernard assilke, a Methodist; the Rev. Ar-old Pederson, a Congregationalist, nd a number of laymen, mostly armers.

Originally the college within a hurch was started for developing ural leadership. But whole families ame and it broadened out to be-ome a community civic center. Iore than 260 came in for the pro-ram one night this week. And what id you see and hear. . . ?

The winter college classes came first. In one room Dr. Harvey Pettit from the Milwaukee Calvary Presbyterian church had his coat off, shirt sleeves rolled up and was leading a group of people, young and old, in church music. In the adjoining room Mrs. Esther DeWeerdt of Beloit was discussing the problems of human emotion and the quirks of human living.

## Talk Over Appliances

Go over to another room. The county home demonstration agents talk with the women on kitchen appliances, such things as washing machines, the merit of electricity and bottle gas for fuel and how to save steps. Other times, they talk about making the front yard sparkle with shrubs and flowers.

Across the street in a residence, Prof. P. E. McNall of the agricultural economics department of the University of Wisconsin talks to farmers on practical farm accounting. The farmers and McNall discuss farm economics, the price trends and the danger of farm prices collapsing when and if industrial pay rolls drop and the huge export shipments end. The farmers all show a disposition to help feed hungry people and they understand the Marshall plan.

There is one thing that stands out in this church born winter college program. They never slight religion in making the program popular. One of the largest groups is listening to the Rev. Gorden Amphlett of Burlington on Bible interpretation. Here the Honey Creek people talk over their Bible as it applies to their every day living and their homes.

## The Forum Starts

The classes over, everybody goes to the community hall for the forum. This night there is a panel discussion on "What Shall Be the Relationship Between Agriculture, Industry and Labor?"

Representing industry is Harold (Buck) Story, vice-president of the Allis-Chalmers Manufacturing Co. For labor there is George Haberman, Milwaukee, president of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, and for agriculture, Milo K. Swanton, Madison, executive secretary of the Wisconsin Council of Agriculture Co-Operative.

Leslie Brown of Madison, from the University of Wisconsin public discussion department, is moderator. When the group assembles religion is not slighted. There is a scripture reading and prayer. Everybody sings God Bless America. The audience settles back to hear the forum.

Now, then, what are the facts regarding the three segments of American economy, the farmer, laborer and the front office of industry? Everybody on the panel agrees the farmer is the key man . . . the balance wheel who kicked over the traces when industry got too cocky and was equally ready to aim a lusty kick when labor got too brash.

## Speakers Have Say

"Farmers realize that everyone is interested in a higher living standard," leads off Swanton. "Labor is interested in the high costs of living, including food, and we farmers are interested in the high cost of tractors that labor builds." Haberman says labor too often has too little knowledge of farm problems and the farmer too often does not understand the problems of organized labor.

Says the labor officer. "I believe farmers have not learned to use collective bargaining to combat speculators on farm products." Shying away from criticizing either agriculture or labor, Story takes the middle road saying, "The high rate of production through the efforts of labor with the engineering skill and ability of management to produce American might on the farm."

After the preliminary skirmishes of the panel, the audience rushes right into the game. These rural people have a habit of getting down to grass roots and refusing to be sidetracked.

"Why can't I get a tractor, or a corn picker or a combine?" is what

one farmer wants to know.

"And why those high prices on machinery?"

Nobody is angry or raises his voice but the farmers pitch sharp questions. "Labor works five days a week. Now if we farmers working seven switched to five days and 40 hours a week do you think there would be food enough?"

### Fewer Produce More

Haberman picks this one up. He says that the five-day work week had been created during the depression to spread work and had become standard in labor. "There is both a material and manpower shortage," adds Story, saying his company needed 3,000 more craftsmen to turn out the tractors needed and much more steel to build the machinery.

"The records show with fewer people on the farms the farmers produced 40% more than before the war," says Swanton. "Can industry and labor equal that record? We cannot have more by producing less in the factories."

The farmers get to their feet and make it clear if they are to continue such high production to meet unusual export requirements and rising domestic demand they must have more machinery at more reasonable prices.

For more than an hour the men and women keep the panel busy answering sharp and direct questions. And they are ready for more when Moderator Brown ends the forum saying:

"At least we have found out that no one in this group, agriculture, industry and labor, can kick the other around. How much better it would be if more people held such town hall meetings making a sincere effort to learn the answers from men in position to give the facts."

These Honey Creek forum subjects vary. All are designed to keep rural people informed and flare the desire for Christian living and ideas.

John R. Barton of the rural sociology department of the University of Wisconsin spoke on "Values Men Live By." V. E. Kivilin, the associate dean of the University of Wisconsin college of agriculture, talked on the value of research. Rockwell C. Smith of the Garrett Biblical institute, Evanston, closed the season's program.

The Honey Creek winter night college is going strong and its members have firm opinions on the issues of the day. They have talked them over at their town hall, every one having a voice if he wants it.

*(Reprinted by permission from the Milwaukee Journal)*

### Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

### Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

# Watchers of the Springs

Psalm 84:4-8

MURRAY L. WAGNER

• *The following is from the text of a "prize-winning sermon for the Rural Life Sermon Contest," conducted by THE CHRISTIAN SUN, a journal of the Congregational Christian Churches, published at Richmond, Virginia:*

Many years ago one of our towns had voted to improve its water system. Mains were laid to a network of lovely mountain springs whose pure waters flowed by gravity into the homes of the nearby town. After a season the housewives began to complain that the water was dirty; bits of leaves and other foreign matter found the way into the line.

The town fathers chose a man who lived near the springs and assigned him the task of keeping the springs clean of leaves and debris and to keep the lines open. The Watcher was a quiet, unassuming man, who seldom went to the town, but attended strictly to his assigned task and his own personal affairs.

### The Public Servant

Few people had ever met the Watcher of the Spring. He was just a shadowy figure who moved in the background and whose name was never heard by the townspeople save as they noted that name on the annual budget. No one paid special heed to the man until the depression came and with it the demand for a decrease in expenditures. The fathers decided to "lay off" this Watcher of the Spring in order to reduce the expenses.

Not long after this the mothers again entered their protest; the water was polluted and there were those who would trace the mounting illness to this cause. It was a poor economy—to reduce the pay roll by laying off the Watchman and in consequence hazard the health of the community.

The Watchman was hastily sought out and returned to his old task. It was but a brief period until the public was refreshed by the pure, clean waters and knew well that "The Watcher is back at the Springs again!"

The Eighty-fourth Psalm has another picture of the Watchers of the Springs. A quiet, unassuming man, without fanfare or heroic gesture, is passing through the Valley of Weeping and converting it into a Place of Springs! This man, growing ever stronger, is rendering an ever more essential service to his community as he makes his way up the Hill of

he Lord that he might appear be-
ore his God.

Both of these portraits are those
f the Christian farmer.

"His strength is in God" and in
his heart are the highways to Zion."
'or, indeed, this world is a vale of
ears—a valley of weeping—and this
nan rises as do few others to meet
he hour's demands. Watching by
he springs he beholds the hunger
nd the cold, the thirst and misery
f the world, and leaps to the need.

He passes through the valley of
veeping—an angel of mercy in
atched denim.

## The Christian Farmer

Every Christian farmer recognizes
he soil as his special trust; to him it
s holy ground and he must guard it
s the source of all of man's physical
eeds. What have we, he asks, for
ur bodies, save that which comes
rom the soil? Food, clothing, fuel,
ven the air and water as well as
*nateria medica* come from the good
arth. Who else is in such a position
o guard this spring?

One of America's great heroes and
ne of her early farmers, Patrick
Henry, said, "He is the greatest pa-
riot who stops the most gullies."
'rom the time that God set man in
he garden to be his special assistant
he farmer has been God's chosen
uardian and watcher of this spring
vhich now is so vital to the world's
hildren passing through the valley
f weeping.

A cry of hunger comes from the
hroat of the world's suffering and
he Christian farmer leaps to his
low with a prayer; naked groan in
heir misery and this man answers
vith longer hours in the sheepfold,
he cotton and the flax; the sick in
he anguish and fever of their ill-
ess may know that the springs of
ealth are being guarded by the
nen of the soil and food is being
laced in the hand of the physician
t his prescription. This Watcher
elieves life's greatest joy will be to
ear the Christ say, "I was in hun-
er and ye fed me; naked and ye
lothed me, sick and ye ministered
nto me. . ."

The fulness of nature is his to direct. He moves quietly but joyously about his chosen and holy task. There is no fanfare as he mounts his tractor at daybreak and there is no idle chatter about wages and hours and overtime and strikes as he eats his supper by lamplight. His business is to change the world's tears into laughter, that the valley of weeping may become a place of springs. It is a divine assignment and the man who faithfully accepts it, ministering "unto even these least" has the approval of the Christ.

Watching by the springs the farmer sees his responsibility before God and man. He holds within his grasp the power to make the world suffer or to make it rejoice. Even though God gives the whole earth sunshine and rain; heat and frost in perfect balance; and even though the Divine Hand withhold no good thing, if this Watcher fail his God the place of springs may become the valley of weeping.

## Springs of Social Life

Here on the farm is the spring of American leadership. Anyone who has even a slight acquaintance with the American scene must be impressed by the preponderance of the rural background in our leadership. Furthermore, America never apologizes for its pioneer stock; rather she boasts that here we pay high compliment to our chief executive when we speak of him as having been "the Missouri ploughboy." Here, we say, is an evidence of our democracy at work. And down deep in the most urban soul among us there is the assurance that while the Christian farmer stands with bare arm and clear eye watching over our heritage we shall have a leadership unexcelled on this earth.

America's social life depends ever more upon its rural springs. With the birth rate in our cities falling, and in some instances dropping below the death rate, it becomes more apparent that our social springs are in the forested hills, the pastured plains and the tilled valleys of our land.

Here the farm family holds forth, diligently watching to keep the springs pure—and knowing that the task begins at his own spring, his own farm. Their labors unheralded and unacclaimed, they meet the temptations imposed upon them by the ever encroaching urban life into their once secluded grove. Mother and dad know that their responsibilities lie here and they know that the church, the nation and the future depend heavily upon their devotion to their tasks. From their fireside will come the automobile mechanics, the doctors, the dentists, the ministers, the housewives, the postman, the legislators, the bus drivers —the men and women who make America.

The Christian farmer needs men and women of other professions to stand with him and his wife as they watch the springs. He rejoices in the arrival of a new teacher, a country banker, a groceryman, a minister, a dentist—anyone who will appreciate the call and give ear to it. In rural areas too often there have been few professional people standing by the farmer. Shall the noble callings of medicine and pulpit, legal bar and classroom fail to cooperate in changing the destiny of the nation? Dare they refuse to assume their rightful place beside those who through the years have in so large a measure converted the tears of the world into the fountains of life?

## Spiritual Springs

"Blessed are they who dwell in Thy House . . . in whose heart are the highways to Zion." There are many of our city folk, thank God!—of whom these lines may be written, but for the actual Watchers of the Springs you will go to the country. The rural church may be as the cynics have it, with a wheezy old organ, a nasal toned minister, a shredded pulpit Bible, a poorly trained teaching staff—but there is something the cynic has not seen. He was busy snooping under unpainted pews and curled up, torn carpets. He didn't look under the shirt of the man in the pulpit, nor beneath that of the man in the pew.

Had he done so he would have come back to his city apartment with a different kind of story. He would have told of simple hearted folk whose desires are set upon eternal things, not on fine shirts and big organs—proper as those things may be. He would have told of people whose great joy is to change the tears of many unto joy. How they knew from experience the profit and the values of that statement of the railsplitter, "When I am gone I'd like to have it said of me that I plucked a thorn and planted a rose where I thought a rose would grow." He, too, was a Watcher.

About seventy-five per cent of the leadership of America's churches are from the rural areas. Here, then, at the source—right at the spring—we must take heed that the springs are kept pure, and unnamed millions of us whose lives are in the soil must stand guard at the spiritual springs of America. We may, if we wish, have in our hearts the highways to Zion.

One cannot walk far on this road with the Watchers without being made aware of the seriousness with which he takes his assignment. On every side of this highway to Zion the road is flanked by "The Lord's Acres," yielding abundantly for the cause of Christ; pastures are literally dotted with heifers raised for the relief of hungry in many parts of the world—"The cattle on a thousand hills are His;" carloads of wheat; tons of rice; truckloads of clothing; kettles of soap; cases of home raised foods—all being sent to those who are in the valley of weeping. American Christian farmers are going, with families, "from strength to strength," every one of them appearing before God.

To be a comrade with these Watchers is at once an opportunity and a responsibility. It is America's hope and it is for the benefit of the whole world that America will fulfill the law of Christ.

Christian farmer, lead us then, that we may share with you the joy which is reserved for those who, "Passing through the Valley of weeping make it a Place of Springs."

# We Need a Rural Ministry

MYLES W. RODEHAVER

• This is a plea for a ministry that will meet the needs of rural people. While recent social trends point to an accelerated *rapprochment* between rural and urban ways of life, differences still remain. It is true that the dweller in village or farm is quite as interested in world affairs as is the resident of "megapolis," that the man whose cottage is nestled on the edge of the forest is just as perplexed by Gromyko's vetoes as is the man whose apartment overlooks Central Park. It is equally true that many of the assumed differences in psychological traits no longer exist or, if they do, it is merely a matter of degree. The improvement of transportation and communication facilities has operated to cut down differentials in "mental mobility," or the readiness to accept the new.

## Personal Basis of Rural Life

One persistent fact remains, however. In spite of a vague feeling on the part of urban people that, somehow, agriculture is basic to our machine culture, rural people evince closer ties to the land. Their relation to their environment affects their very way of life. Not the least important of the ramifications of this condition lies in the fact that leadership arises out of the intimate, repetitive, face-to-face contacts which serve to differentiate the rural from the urban. Herein is the great opportunity of the rural church. The day-to-day associations of the rural minister with his people provide the framework for constructive, creative leadership. The sad commentary is that too often the minister is ill-equipped, by training or attitude, to supply what it takes!

Because rural people have shown a willingness to adopt the artifacts and accept the *externals* of city life, some writers have emphasized the *urbanization* of American society. To an extent this is accurate, proofs of the two-way nature of the process notwithstanding. One unfortunate correlate, however, is the notion that rural life "in process" is rural life on the road to something *better!*

Once such a premise is accepted in popular thinking, its application to the institutions of rural society is relatively easy. The implication is that, for an institution (in this case the church) which has not yet "arrived," leadership somewhat short of the best is adequate. Consciously or unconsciously, we have considered the rural church in this light, with results more often unhappy than satisfactory!

Attention has been focused on the ineffectiveness of the rural church. The basic underlying factors are not hard to identify. Let us consider the reasons most often offered.

## The Negatives

"Because of overchurching, congregations are too small to support an effective ministry." Denominational rivalry, tradition, sentiment, and plain inertia have combined to bring about such a condition. Various estimates have set a minimum of 100 active members as an adequate economic base for the rural church. Many churches fall woefully short of the minimum. Recent studies by the writer reveal that a proportion as high as 25 percent of "non-resident," hence inactive and non-contributing, members is not uncommon. These people have moved to the cities. While their names remain on the records of the church, in most cases they represent just so much dead wood.

It is the *exception* when the non-resident member remembers his home church and contributes to its support. The church with fewer than 100 members finds it difficult to support a minister. Often in cases where the membership is too small, the constituents resort to that diagnostic of despair, the "yoked parish," a step which merely complicates the problems by a process of accretion! Tiny, competing congregations cannot hope to attract good men.

"Ministers are poorly-trained and

oorly-paid." Which of these condi-
ons antecedes the other is a matter
f conjecture, but there is little
oubt that they are related! In vast
eas of our country we have rel-
gated the graduates of "Bible
hools" to care for rural religious
eeds. We have sent the people men
ho lack the essential qualities of
adership and then wondered why
e program falls short of their
eeds. The modern rural community
nnot afford the doubtful luxury of
l-equipped leadership.

### tepping Stones

"The rural church is the stepping-
one to the city church." There is
e factor of personal ambition, of
stlessness, of impatience with
small town stuff." But one basic
use is to be found in denomi-
ational attitudes and policies. Too
ften it is the city man who finds his
ay unto important denominational
ommittees. In a recent survey con-
ucted by the author, one of the
inisters commented, "We rural
en are of little consequence at
church) conventions."

Whether or not the truth of this
n be established, it represents an
titude which helps to explain why
en want to leave rural parishes. The
mmon feeling that certain city
urches are "D.D. churches" im-
lies that recognition comes more or
ss automatically to those fortunate
ough to "land" one of them.
Why should I waste my life in a
untry church, my work never rec-
gnized, much of it futile?"

Partly as a result of these atti-
des, in combination with other
ctors, the "successful" men are said
gravitate to the cities. This differ-
tial mobility serves to take the
inisters who are in their prime,
aving the very young and the very
d to serve the rural communities.
o be sure, enthusiasm and energy
e associated with extreme youth,
d sage wisdom and experience
ith old age, but too often the en-
usiasm is misdirected, while the
ge wisdom is marked by conserva-
ve attitudes and the experience by
espair!

To look upon the rural church as a place to gain experience is to cast it in the role of guinea pig, while to consider the rural community as a place to retire is to consign it to a position of inconsequence—the stepping-stone or the jumping-off place. Neither concept suits the temper of the modern rural community. The spring-board to higher things, whether the "higher things" be of this world or the next, represents an analogy which reflects an unwholesome attitude toward the "seed-bed of democracy." Witness the comment offered by a business man in a small village in western New York, "We get sick of having some old man coming to us, preaching his best sermons of twenty-five years ago. We have moved along in our thinking, why can't the preachers?" The rural community needs a vital message, not a rehash of what was acceptable a generation ago!

### Responsibilities of Seminaries

Insofar as the inexperience of young men is concerned, the theological schools are at fault in some degree. We send our young men to the rural areas as student-pastors and then leave them largely to their own devices. Supervision of student ministers costs a good deal in terms of money and man-hours. If our schools are not ready to pay the price, it were better that our fledglings follow their cloistered ways for another year or two, at least adding the maturity of years to their formal education before trying their wings!

With supervision must go particularized training. Not a token bow to the urgency of the situation in the form of a single course in rural sociology, but a curriculum plus a plan suited to the needs! There must be less emphasis on theology and the Biblical languages and more on agricultural economics, group work, and community organization, the essentials that will prepare for creative leadership in the rural community.

### Recognition Needed

Rural churches have the right to expect good men, and the men, rightfully, expect to be paid. To borrow from Stuart Chase, "Where is the money coming from?" The writer does not favor long-continued subsidies for churches, except in unusual circumstances. It is doubtful that a good case could be made for such a financing program for most rural churches. However, this is not to say that subsidies for recuperation or for initiatory efforts are bad. Subsidy for a good man who can build is one thing. Old-age pensions for decrepit churches is another! Lavish poor-relief, no, but investment in a potentially-successful enterprise, yes!

More recognition for men in rural fields would work wonders. Important committee assignments for rural men, a voice in policy-making, assurance that the work they are doing is of real significance in their Zion, these are elements of a far-sighted denominational approach.

We need a rural ministry. The rural ministry needs men who by training and attitude are prepared for the job. The theological schools and the denominations which support them must provide the men. The challenge is ours!

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## City Minister Finds Minds Imprisoned by City Life

• Seventy-five per cent of the population of the United States live in towns or cities which "take a constant toll of human energy," the Rev. Dr. John Sutherland Bonnell, minister of the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church, at Fifty-fifth Street, New York City, said recently.

"Living among crowds cramps and imprisons the mind," he said. "It fosters mob mentality; it develops shallow thinking. We see only the externals of life, while its depths are hidden from view. Jesus urged his disciples periodically to come apart from the crowds and find restoration and spiritual renewal in quiet places.

"The surest remedy for the depletion of nervous energy is quiet and restful waiting upon God. When a soul is restored, body and mind are included in this healing ministry."

## In the Religious Press

• *The Colgate-Rochester Bulletin,* Rochester, N. Y., December 1947, emphasizes the National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country which was held in Rochester, N. Y., November 4-6, 1947, by publishing the addresses given there by Mark Rich and William G. Mather. "The Rural Church Situation as Seen by a Social Scientist," by Dr. Mather, is a constructive discussion of the concerns of rural churches today while Dr. Rich's address, "The Rural Church Movement Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," provides a summary of town and country Church programs and gives a taste of the quality of the Convocation to those who could not attend.

*World Call,* Indianapolis, Ind., January 1948, presents an abstract of the address delivered by Miss Evelyn R. Hodgdon of the State Teachers College, Oneonta, N. Y., at the fourth annual Convocation on the Church in Town and Country, Rochester, N. Y., November 5, 1947, under the title, "Leadership in Rural Areas."

On the title page of *Gospel Messenger,* Elgin, Ill., January 3, 1948, the editor, Desmond W. Bittinger, tells how great achievements have grown out of humble churches under the heading, "Rural Church Has Missionary History."

In *The Christian Evangelist,* St. Louis, Mo., January 7, 1948, a Sunday school teacher writes about the grave problem of many rural churches under the title, "I Want a Pastor."

In *National Baptist Voice,* Nashville, Tenn., December 1, 1947, V. A. Edwards presents a statement of the rural church work of the National Baptist Convention. The article is entitled "Rural Church Work."

*The Christian Advocate,* Chicago, Ill., January 1, 1948, presents "The Church and the Land," by Ralph A. Felton. Dr. Felton is Professor of Rural Sociology at Drew Theological Seminary, Madison, N. J., and this article is a discussion of a study made by him and some of his students to determine the relationship between conservation of soil, farm ownership, standards of living and church activities.

In *Social Questions* (a bulletin of The Methodist Federation for Social Action), New York, N. Y., January 1948, Roger Ortmayer writes about "Rural Social Action." Some of the subheads of this article are: "Farming Conditions"; "Rural Mental Health Situation"; "Children as Farm Workers."

*The Mennonite Community,* Scottdale, Pa., January 1948, publishes "Learning to Know our Soil," by Leroy Gingerich. This is the story of soil stewardship in the Versailles, Missouri, community.

*The Christian Rural Fellowship Bulletin,* 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., November 1947, features "Three Measures of Farm Success" by Frank W. Peck. Mr. Peck is Director of the Farm Foundation, and speaks out of wide experience in helping rural people meet the problems of farm management and better rural living. "Rediscovering God's Earth," by Bishop William C. Martin, of the Methodist Church, is published in the December 1947 issue of the same Bulletin. This address, which stresses the church's obligation to interpret the deeper significance of farm life, was delivered recently over the Columbia Church of the Air.

*Mountain Life and Work,* Berea, Kentucky, Winter 1947, presents an article by Francis Drake entitled "The Rural Church Faces Forward." Mr. Drake, Field Secretary of Friends of the Soil, clearly states the principles and program of this organization and tells of the constructive work being done at several demonstration centers.

*The American Friends Service Committee Bulletin,* Philadelphia, Pa., January 1948, makes a plea for all Americans to practice conservation of soil and food in order to help feed millions of abnormally hungry people in Europe and Asia.

In *The Missionary Herald at Home and Abroad,* 287 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., January 1948, Arthur Higgins writes about "Rural Music," and gives many suggestions for appropriate worshipful music. He says: "Much of our great music is pastoral. The use of this music will tend to give everyone a consciousness of stewardship and an awareness of the nearness of God."

*The Baptist Town and Country Fellowship Bulletin,* Delavan, Wis., January 1948, under the heading, "Heifers (and Goats) for Relief," states that about 500 heifers have been shipped to Naples since December 1947, and a total of 400 goats have gone to Japan.

*The United Presbyterian,* Pittsburgh, Pa., January 12, 1948, contains several articles of interest to those most concerned with the rural church. Among them are George P. Kerr's "Evaluation of Rural Program of United Presbyterian Church"; "How the Rural Minister Can Improve His Ministry," by P. G. Dykhuizen, Superintendent of Missions, Iowa Synod, who urges a continuous program of friendship evangelism to infuse a congregation with new life and power;, "The Story of Romine Prairie Congregation" (Salem, Ill.), by George H. Kehli, its pastor; and "The Time Has Come for Our Churches to Awake," by Edwin A. Hunter. Mr. Hunter says: "Is it not reasonable to assume that the type of leadership we have in church and state tomorrow will depend very largely upon what we do with the rural church today? If the country areas are allowed to deteriorate, to degenerate, it must mean an inferior moral and spiritual leadership in both church and state tomorrow."

In *Gospel Messenger,* Elgin, Ill., January 17, 1948, Howard H. Keim, Jr., pastor of Ivester Church, Iowa, tells about the joyous service and far-reaching influence of the country preacher in an article entitled "The Rural Pulpit."

*The Anglican Outlook,* Ottawa, Canada, January 1948, presents "The Hymn Book in the Rural Church," by Sidney Wood. Suggestions are given in this article for the musical portions of all church services.

## Mount Union College

Roger Ortmayer and Robert R. well report the Mount Union llege Project on Church and Com- nity. The four objectives are as lows:

. "To make studies that will aid al churches as they seek to make elligent adjustments in their pro- m to meet the demands of com- nity changes.

. "To help churches, on invita- n, as they seek to work out these ustments, by making the re- rces of the college available to m.

. "To develop projects which p the Church to serve the com- nity.

. "To lead college students to awareness of the church's place d to an attitude toward the rch that will make them effective rchmen now and after finishing lege."

Mount Union College is at Alli- ce, Ohio.

## Rural Schools

The Woman's Press, 600 Lexing- n Avenue, New York 22, N. Y., an- unces the publication of a pam- let, "What Can We Expect of ral Schools?" by Mildred Welch anston. The price is 35c a copy.

The pamphlet is intended for ople living in rural communities o want to know what they can do make their schools better, and at they should expect from the ools they have. The author be- ves that children are more im- rtant than ideas about them. In- ded in the pamphlet is the rther title, "A Charter of Educa- n for Rural Children," which s prepared by the First White use Conference on Rural Educa- n.

## Friends of the Soil

The new officers of Friends of the il, Pinehurst, N. C., for the year 48 are as follows: Eugene Smathers, airman; Richard O. Comfort, Ad- inistrative Secretary; Francis A. ake, Field Secretary. Advisory mmittee: Howard Kester; Melvin atson.

Dublin, New Hampshire

*A. Devaney, Inc., N. Y.*

## Minnesota Council's Work with Children

• Several years ago the Minnesota Council of Churches decided to organize a special department in order to meet two great needs:

1. The training of teachers for children in rural church schools;
2. The enlistment of boys and girls in rural communities who are not receiving Christian education.

The Minnesota Council of Church Women raised the funds. Two trained workers, Mrs. August Beck and Frances Myers, were employed to assist the rural churches in meeting these needs.

Miss Myers, on account of recent work in Aitkin County, reveals a portion of the program:

Thirty-nine children began Sunday School in two Aitkin County churches as a result of the ministry of the Minnesota Council of Church Women.

In conversation a Probate Judge in Aitkin County stated "A woman in Ball Bluff wants to start a Sunday School: I don't know her name."

This statement started a thread of activities running through that community. Result—a Sunday School with 23 children and a number of adults who remained for the service on preaching Sundays.

Let us follow this thread in the religious picture of Aitkin County. A visit in the homes of another community was the first step. I was told that this place was the first settlement north of Libby, but no one told me it was 25 miles north. Nor did they mention that it was a dirt road with sink-holes.

These calls yielded the information that an Augustana Lutheran Church was serving an area ten miles long and four miles wide with preaching twice a month by the Rev. S. A. Erling, of Palisade.

No one could remember just when they had had Sunday School, but the church had voted to begin one.

Mrs. Mack Anderson, comparatively new in the community, and a school teacher, and Mrs. Erling, the pastor's wife, together touched off the spark of enthusiasm for this activity.

## Book Review

*Good Times in the Rural Church.* By Edward L. Schlingman. The Christian Education Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 1947. $1.25.

This 79-page book is a discussion of recreation for the rural church. It contains many suggestions for year-round programs; a comprehensive bibliography; and directions for making box games, puzzles, and courts for out-of-door games. Quotations from *Song of the Earth,* by Fred D. Wentzel, contribute to guidance into a full realization of abundant living.

The author of this book, although city-born, has been a rural pastor for many years and is a lover of the country way of living. He has rendered a valuable service by his study of wholesome, constructive recreation for church groups of all ages.

—Ruth B. Robinson

*Albert Schweitzer—The Man and His Mind.* By George Seaver. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1947. $3.75.

This is a biography of a person who was recently called the "greatest man in the world" in the popular *Life* magazine. Mr. Seaver is an English scholar who is capable of interpreting Schweitzer as philosopher, musician, physician, and theologian. It may be appropriate here to refer simply to the "rural aspects" of this notable career.

Albert Schweitzer retains his affection for the villages in the Vosges hills in Alsace, where he was born and spent his boyhood and youth. The hills are low and rolling near Günsbach, and the woods are filled with fir, beech, oak and chestnut. Schweitzer was the oldest son of the village pastor. In Günsbach he built a house in his later years, and on his periodic visits from Lambaréné in the French Equatorial Africa he found rest and refreshment in his native place.

In Günsbach, as in a number of places of Alsace, the Roman Catholic priest says mass in the choir of a church of a Sunday morning, and a little later the pastor says prayers and preaches from the nave. This is said to be a unique arrangement in Christendom, and it was originated on order of Louis XIV.

For Albert Schweitzer these Catholic-Protestant buildings are a mark of "signal Christian grace," and a symbol of a great day of the future. The little boy let his eyes rest upon both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant altars in the little church. "The boy that was native to a Franco-German province, and within that province the child of a Protestant-Catholic church, has made of the man a unifying influence, political, religious, and in all other ways."

—Benson Y. Landis

### Goals for American Agriculture

• The Agricultural Relations Department, Council for Social Action, Congregational Christian Churches, Merom, Ind., announces the publication of a leaflet, "Christian Goals for American Agriculture." This will be available for use in connection with observances of Rural Life Sunday, 1948. Prices are as follows: 3c each; 25c per dozen; $1.50 per hundred.

This is the second in a series of leaflets issued by the Agricultural Relations Department of the Congregational Christian Council for Social Action.

The first leaflet entitled "The Earth is the Lord's (A Study of Stewardship as Conservation of Earth's Resources)" is still available in limited quantity.

These leaflets are for the use of ministers, Sunday School teachers and group discussion leaders. They may be used as suggestive sermon outlines for class or group discussion, for display on literature tables, or for circulation in the pews. Their use is especially recommended in connection with Rural Life Sunday or Harvest Festival observances.

### Prayer

For Sunday, May 2 (Rural Life Sunday)

• Lord, make us aware of hungry eyes which look at us from all lands of the earth. Bless the rural church and other instruments of agrarian action that we may rise above the selfishness of farm blocs and partisan policies in the stewardship of land and husbandry. Amen.

—Thomas Alfred Tripp

### The Enlarged Town & Country Church

• We have doubled the size of Town and Country Church.

The Committee on Town and Country decided to take this step as a venture of faith. Receipts from subscriptions have thus far been sufficient to provide an eight-page but not a sixteen-page journal. The hope is that there will be many interested cooperators who will say so many good words about Town and Country Church that we will have enough subscribers, even at the present subscription rate, to carry the venture.

### What You Can Do

There is no central promotion fund for Town and Country Church. It can only be promoted by the interested boards and agencies and by the ministers themselves. Will you, therefore, take responsibilty for:

1. Asking for circulars and sample copies;
2. Announcing the Journal at ministerial association meetings;
3. Seeing that Town and Country Church is announced at all rural church conferences;
4. Sending us material for publication.